

STP:0644

23 AUG 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration
FROM : Director of Training
SUBJECT : CIA Senior Seminar

1. Action Requested: This memorandum is to bring to your attention and to suggest discussion by the Management Committee my concern about the long-term utility of the CIA Senior Seminar. The recent experience of the Training Selection Board with the nominations of officers to attend the course raises serious questions about the overall quality and balance of those attending, particularly when considered in light of the cost of running the Seminar.

2. Basic Data: From its beginning, the Seminar has been designed for supergrade and promising GS-15 officers. In contrast to senior officer courses conducted outside the Agency, the Seminar focuses on subjects and issues of direct concern to CIA and to the U.S. intelligence effort. The quality of presentations is on a level with the National War College, the Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy and the Federal Executive Institute. As the single greatest source of learning in the Seminar is derived from the inputs and interaction of the members, they should be very able officers who collectively represent the different elements of the Agency and its wide range of activities.

3. The first CIA Senior Seminar was run in the fall of 1971. Five Seminars have been held to date and a sixth is due to commence on 22 September. The record of nominations to the Seminar is uneven. Except for Seminar One, when 34 officers were nominated, the number of nominees has tended to be too small to permit the Training Selection Board to pick a consistently strong and balanced group. Attachment A shows the numbers of nominations and selections from Seminars One through Six; the data on Seminar Six are,

of course, subject to further change. You will note from the table that Seminars Five and Six show a significant decline in the number of nominations from the Operations Directorate with the result that it was not represented in proportion to its overall strength.

4. Attachment B gives a breakout of participants in the Seminar as between GS-15's and supergrades. Although attendance by supergrades has been given considerable emphasis by top management, I think that this is a less serious matter than is the need to secure a strong and balanced group, inasmuch as well-qualified GS-15's also make significant contributions. But the record, particularly in the Seminars Four through Six, shows a decided decline in attendance by supergrade officers.

5. Given the current constraints on resources, we must be certain that our investment of personnel and funds is resulting in a maximum return. The cost of running the Seminar is substantial. Using Seminar Five as the basis, the direct costs to OTR of running the Seminar are as follows:

Staff salaries	\$57,000
Guest speaker fees	4,300
Field trip	6,100
Local travel	600
Miscellaneous	200
TOTAL	\$67,200 1/

The direct cost per "student day" of the Senior Seminar Five was \$73; on a comparable basis the cost per student day of the Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy is \$63; the Federal Executive Institute is \$35; the Harvard APP was \$115; and a typical short AMA course is \$176.

6. Staff Position: As shown by the extensive feedback received from the almost 100 officers who attended the first

1/ Not included in this estimate are such indirect costs as the salaries of participants while in the Seminar; the costs associated with CIA and other government speakers; such overhead costs as OTR graphics, library, and audio support; and the cost of facilities used by the Seminar.

five Senior Seminars, they are unanimous that their attendance has been beneficial to them in present and prospective job assignments. I think that the value and quality of the program are well known, and it is not necessary to establish or belabor that point here. Given the experience with the nominations to Seminars Five and Six, I do not, however, believe that the Seminar is fulfilling Mr. Colby's recommendation of 25 September 1972, that it "be aimed at senior levels who will go to higher responsibilities."

7. In the light of the above, several options appear to be open:

- a. As part of the Annual Personnel Plan, each Directorate could identify those senior officers selected for attendance in future runnings of the Seminar as part of their executive development. In August 1972, Mr. Colby envisaged that such "programming" for the Senior Seminar and other essential courses could be done up well in advance of actual attendance. If carried out, this course of action would indicate whether the Seminar should be continued on its present basis;
- b. If candidates for the Seminar are not nominated or cannot be identified through the Annual Personnel Plan in sufficient numbers to provide a strong and balanced group, the Seminar could be discontinued following its sixth running in November; or alternatively,
- c. The Seminar could be transformed, in cooperation with the IC Staff, into a course for senior officers from throughout the Intelligence Community. In order to make it a truly inter-agency program, it would require, in my judgment, an inter-agency staff and a reduction in the number of CIA attendees; i.e., the number of Agency participants should be in rough proportion to the Agency's strengths within the total Intelligence Community or about four or five per running.

8. Recommendation: I recommend that you bring the issues raised above to the attention of the CIA Management Committee and to the Director, given his extensive personal involvement in selecting qualified officers and his interest in the Seminar.

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Alfonso Rodriguez
Director of Training

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